



NEWS RELEASE

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WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

UPDATE: PROJECT CEASEFIRE
INDEPENDENCE, RAYMORE FELONS SENTENCED
FOR ILLEGAL POSSESSION OF FIREARMS

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that two felons were sentenced in federal court today, in separate and unrelated cases, for violating federal firearms law. Today's sentencings are part of Project Ceasefire, the district's ongoing anti-crime initiative.

***Joey C. Neff**, 48, of Raymore, Mo., was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Nanette K. Laughrey this morning to 15 years and eight months in federal prison without parole.

On Oct. 22, 2003, **Neff** pleaded guilty to being a felon in possession of several firearms. By pleading guilty, he admitted that he was in possession of a Mossberg 30-06 rifle, a Remington 12-gauge shotgun, a Browning .22 caliber rifle, a Remington .243 caliber rifle and an H&R Model 686 .22 caliber revolver on July 5, 2003. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for any felon to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. **Neff** has four criminal felony convictions for burglary and four criminal felony convictions for stealing between 1986 and 1992.

Neff was originally charged in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury on July 22, 2003, in Kansas City.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Bruce E. Clark. It was investigated by the Lake Winnebago, Mo., Police Department, the Cass County, Mo., Sheriff's Department, the Missouri State Highway Patrol and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

***Steven A. Curtner**, 26, of Independence, Mo., was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Ortrie D. Smith this morning to five years in federal prison without parole.

On Sept. 15, 2003, **Curtner** pleaded guilty to being a felon in possession of a firearm. By pleading guilty, he admitted that he was in possession of a 20-gauge Mossberg shotgun on Aug. 28, 2003. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for any felon to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. **Curtner** has a 1998 criminal felony conviction for receiving stolen property and a 1999 criminal felony conviction for stealing.

Curtner was originally charged in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury on Sept. 10, 2003, in Kansas City.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Bruce E. Clark. It was investigated by the Independence, Mo., Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

Project Ceasefire

Project Ceasefire, launched in October 1999, is a cooperative initiative by federal and local law enforcement and the Kansas City Crime Commission that targets for federal prosecution persons who unlawfully use or possess firearms.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at
www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow